



The Grapevine Telegraph

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Special points of interest:

- Upcoming events featured on final page
- Living History Guild wows crowds
- National Park Service visitors 'obsess' over Passport Program
- Community garden is study in relevancy

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Juneteenth Celebration 2011 Draws Record 1,000 Visitors



The Booker T. Washington Living History Guild depicts the moment of freedom for Booker and his family during Juneteenth Celebration. Pictured from L to R: Volunteers: Megan Carter, Don Kelso, Christian Todd, Beatrice Icemen, Lilille Head, John Whitfield and Penny Blue. (NPS Photo by Cameron Sumpter)

On June 18, 2011, Booker T. Washington National Monument hosted its annual Juneteenth Gospel Music Celebration. 1000 visitors shared in the fellowship, fun, and festivities as the community came together to celebrate one of the most important moments in our nation's history, the moment of emancipation for approximately four million people of African descent from the bonds of slavery after the end of the Civil War.

The event began at 11 a.m. with local and regional speakers. Superintendent Carla Whitfield served as the M. C. for the program. Cheryl Thomas, Senior Director of Development for Tuskegee University delivered

the keynote address while volunteer historian John Whitfield presented the historical context for the celebration. Dr. Thierno Thiam from the President's Office at Tuskegee University spoke to the relevancy of celebrating Juneteenth today. Kim Woodard, who became President of the Tuskegee National Alumni Association (TNAA) in August 2008 and is currently the Associate Director of Development for Tuskegee University, was also in attendance. The delegation from Tuskegee University was invited also to seed a new partnership linking the park to the University.

Two "Tears of Freedom" tours featuring living history costumed interpretation was held

at 12:15 p.m. and 2:00 p.m., focusing on the moment when freedom came for those enslaved on the Burroughs plantation, where Booker T. Washington was born. Both tours produced standing-room-only performances and received rave reviews from the audiences.

Free pony rides, gourd and face painting, a civil war soldier's tent display, and several games were all features of the Children's Village. Numerous take-away souvenirs and prizes put countless happy smiles on the park's youngest visitors.

National recording artist Luther Barnes and the Sunset Jubilaires punctuated(cont. page 4)



A sign of the times.

"In these very, very tough economic times, I think it is important for us to learn to talk about our national parks from an economic standpoint."

Director Jon Jarvis

"No race can prosper until it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem."

Booker T. Washington

Superintendent's Corner

I'm old enough to remember the oil crisis of the 1970s. And, I also vividly remember the government shutdowns of the 1990s. These memories call to mind the joke about a man who falls into a hole. It is very deep, and the walls are so steep that he can't get out.

A doctor walks by, and the man calls out. "Can you help me?" The doctor writes a prescription and throws it into the hole.

Then, a priest walks by, and the man yells, "Can you please help me?" The priest writes a prayer and throws it into the hole.

Finally, a friend walks by, and the man in the hole again asks for help. The friend jumps into the hole with him, and the startled man says, "Why did you do that? Now, we are both in this hole."

"Yes, I know," the friend replies. "But I've been in this hole before, and I know the way out."

In some ways, I feel like the friend since I feel like I'm down in the hole, too. And to a certain extent, I feel as though I've traveled this path before. However, unlike the friend, I have no clear idea of how to get out

from under the economic challenges that this country currently faces. I suppose if I did, I'd be the woman of the decade.

However, what I do know is that we are made of tougher stuff than we think and we can do our part to battle our way out of this hole that we find ourselves in. And, I also know that getting out of a hole seems much easier if you have a friend who will lend you a hand out.

So, I guess that it's time for us to look for friends who can help us climb out. To that end, we should take some direction from Director Jarvis' following remarks, "In these very, very tough economic times, I think that it is important for us to learn to talk about our national parks from an economic standpoint."

How do we begin to talk about Booker T. Washington NM from an economic standpoint? Well, we might start by always keeping upper most in our minds that community support is important for tourism; the industry affects and is affected by the entire community. To gain this support, our community needs

to understand the relative importance of tourism to this region, including tourism's contribution to economic activity in the area, particularly as it relates to the contributions made by this park. What are the park's contributions to this community?

Let's first take a look at the numbers of visitors who come to park annually. Those 24,000 visitors help to employ 10 persons fulltime with as many as 4.5 additional persons each year. Those same visitors typically spend on average 2 days in area hotels, eating at local restaurants, and spending money in nearby stores.

Now, let's turn our attention to park employees. While our number is modest, our long-term impact is not. Over time, we contribute to the tax base through the homes that we purchase. We spend our earnings in stores, as do our family members. And, our personal efforts of community service lend much to the overall value of the park existing and striving in this community.

This is not all that should be mentioned...but, it's a start.

Did You Know?



When Booker T. Washington arrived at Hampton Institute, he was dirty, hungry, and completely penniless. Miss Mackie, the head teacher, had little pity for him, and told him to sweep the floor on his way out. He swept it 3 times, mopped it, and washed the walls. She was so impressed, she let him work his way through school as a janitor. Still teaching us how to do common things in uncommon ways.



Booker always understood the importance of working with one's hands. He shared his thoughts on this matter with his students at Tuskegee Institute and his own children. Pictured with his son, he demonstrates how to garden.

As Summer Heats Up, Reflections Come from the Winter: Bundle Up and Brave the Cold by Betsy Haynes

As I sit in my office at Booker T. Washington National Monument's Mission 66 visitor center with my teeth chattering, I wonder why the heating system in this place isn't better? Why am I sitting here in 3 layers of the NPS uniform trying to get warm while typing on my computer keyboard? Of course, the office has windows that only let in a slight draft once in a while and I am listening to "A Charlie Brown Christmas" by the Vince Guaraldi Trio...so I can deal with a little discomfort, right?

Then, I start to think about the time that Booker T. Washington lived on this plantation from 1856 until 1865. He was barely clothed in a flax shirt called a "shirt tail", basically something that looks like a burlap sack. No pants. Shoes roughly made with cowhide and wood. Washington described the beginnings of his life in his autobiography, *UP FROM SLAVERY*. The cabin he described living in had so many holes that it would let in the "cold chilly air" of winter. These holes were large enough, he wrote, "for small animals to crawl through." This person was born as chattel, or property, as an enslaved person. He could not go to school to get an education or work to make money to buy a winter coat, nor could his mother. His stepfather lived on another plantation nearby and was owned by someone else so he couldn't provide much for his family.

Also, I am thinking of all the bounty of food I have at my desk. You may ask what that would include? Currently, there is an apple, a few packages of Captains Wafers, a box of Wheat Thins, a jar of peanut butter, a box of candy Nips, and

an extra large Hershey's chocolate bar with almonds that was delivered by Santa Claus last week. Booker remembered being hungry. He described that his family never really sat down to a table to eat but got a cup of milk here and he "acquired" a potato and would roast it and thoroughly enjoy it. Once in a while he would get a little molasses on his plate and he would move the plate around to spread the molasses so that it would appear to be more of it. Meanwhile, I am pondering what my new year's resolution will be. How many pounds will I need to lose starting New Year's Day?

If you come out to visit Booker T. Washington National Monument on a cold winter day, you too can have a taste of a real experience of what it must have been like to be a slave living on a mid-19th century plantation here in Piedmont Virginia. Watch the movie "Longing to Learn" based on Washington's autobiography. Read through the exhibits in the park's new exhibit room and learn about Dr. Washington's determination to get an education once freed and his drive to create a university that is today a legacy in Tuskegee, Alabama. Tuskegee National Historic Site is another place you can visit to learn more of the story.

While here, why not bundle up and take a walk down to the reconstructed kitchen cabin where little Booker lived with his mother Jane, older brother John, and younger sister Amanda? Bundled up, you won't have the full experience but just a small taste of what it might've been like. This one room cabin was where Booker's



Staycation visitors gain a broader understanding of Booker's life on a modest plantation in the winter with the interpretation of VIP Linda McLaughlin.

mother carried out her duties as plantation cook but also was the home to her and her three children. Did Jane have more children? We are not sure. During the days of slavery, slave children could be sold away from the family, never to be seen or heard from again, since they were legally not allowed to learn to read or write. The newly formed Booker T. Washington Research Institute will be doing more research to give park staff more information to incorporate into programs and exhibits.

Children will enjoy the farm. It's just a sampling of what was on the Burroughs plantations with Tamsworth hogs, Cotswold sheep, horses, cows, chickens, turkeys, ducks, and geese. Which animal would be your favorite? Booker T. Washington's favorite animals were the pigs. If you visit Tuskegee University today, you will find that there is a veterinarian school on campus, one that is quite difficult to get admitted into. What a legacy this enslaved child accomplished once freed!

If you had visited a few weeks ago, you could have learned about what the Christmas of 1860 might have been like for

the residents and neighbors of the Burroughs Plantation, both free and enslaved. This year's event was "The Last Good Christmas: A Celebration under the Shadow of Impending War." This Christmas event is an annual event put on by staff and volunteers at the Monument the first Saturday of each December. Next year there will be another Christmas event focused on the year 1861. So put it on your calendar now!

However, if you visit now, you will almost have the place to yourself. You do not have to dodge the school crowds or the summer visitors. This is a small National Park with one large story to tell. "Go Tell It On the Mountain" was one of the slave spirituals about spreading the gospel. Hopefully, after reading this article, you will want to put on your sweater, coat, hat, gloves, scarf, and boots and come out to learn more about this amazing history in one of your over 390 National Parks! Then "go tell" your friends and family to come visit this jewel of a National Park. www.nps.gov/bowa

This was originally written for local newspapers as a Getaway article.



Seasonal Brittany Webb seems ready for the summer and for her closeup Mr. DeMille.

"Overall my experience has been a great one with the NPS. I really enjoy all the work I do here and hope I can do it as a career one day."

Faith Adams
Rising Senior
Franklin County HS



Wonder who's behind those Foster Grant's? Could it be Former Superintendent Rebecca Harriet enjoying Juneteenth with Chief Ranger Timbo Sims? You betcha! Welcome back home, Rebecca!

Summer Employees Join Ranks

We are pleased to have 4 great high school students working for the first time with us as part of the YCC program: Abigail Adams, Faith Adams, Steve Holland, and Emmanuel Penn. Amy Reese joins us this summer as the park's first Teacher-Ranger-Teacher. And, returning to service is third-year seasonal Brittany Webb and Josh Terry, rising from the volunteer ranks. They all have inspired us with their enthusiasm and willingness to tackle whatever challenge that has been placed before them.

So far, the YCC students have performed numerous tasks throughout the park and across divisions. They all seem to especially enjoy working maintenance jobs, manning the desk at the Visitor Center and caring for our farm animals. They have taken field trips to other historic sites like our sister park, Appomattox Court House National Historical Park, to learn more about other units of the National Park System.

As soon as Brittany came on board, she was tasked with pulling together the Children's Village for Juneteenth. She was able to create games which



YCCs in action in the tobacco field. Four students were selected



Teacher-Ranger-Teacher Amy Reese

challenged our younger attendees both physically and mentally.

For the entire summer, Josh's

attention will be on script writing for the Living History Guild. Josh's theatrical background as a Theater Major will be put to good use (Cont. on page 9)

Juneteenth (Continued from page 1)



Luther Barnes w/ the Sunset Jublilares

the event with crowd-pleasing gospel selections from their numerous albums. Favorites such as "Heaven on My Mind"

and "It's Your Time" stirred visitors to massive applause.

The group has been together for over 35 years and has gained both national and international fame on the gospel circuit. Their immense popularity has opened the door for the group to perform at the prestigious Apollo Theatre, many of this country's amusement parks, along with travels to the

Bahamas, the Virgin Islands, Jamaica and Germany.

Numerous activities helped to heighten the experience of all who attended. All vendors sold out of their wares, children rode pony rides and played games featuring prizes free of charge, and adults participated in the living history reenactment of Booker's first breath of freedom. It was a good day!

Juneteenth 2011 Photos



Center stage featured . (NPS photo by Linda McLaughlin)



(Left photo) The Booker T. Washington Living History Guild interprets the reactions of the Burroughs Plantation Inhabitants to the firing on Fort Sumpter before a full house in the newly-expanded park Visitor Center. Frank Chenowski portrays the official that brought word to the plantation that emancipation was at hand for Booker T. Washington and the other enslaved persons living there. (NPS photos by Cameron Sumpter)



Hundreds of visitors participated in the Juneteenth 2011 activities. (NPS photo by Bill Tucker)



The Burroughs' Family home.

History Notes: The Burroughs' Plantation Home by John H. Whitfield

In 1833, Thomas Burroughs of Bedford County, Virginia purchased, from Jesse Dillion, Sr. and Aquilla Divers, 177 acres of land on Gills Creek, 16 miles northeast of Rocky Mount, Virginia. Thomas and his family maintained a plantation with at least five enslaved Africans for the next seventeen years until he sold the property to his elder brother James M. Burroughs for \$1,539 (\$341,000 in today's values)* in 1850. The property transferred between the two brothers included buildings valued at \$300, and while the original builder of the house is unknown, it is certain that it predated the ownership of the elder Burroughs.

In the summer of 1937, a local teacher, Essie W. Smith, and Ann S. Joplin, as employees with the Virginia Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) undertook a survey of existing antebellum homes and buildings in Franklin County, Virginia. As part of the W.P.A. Historical Inventory Project which was supervised by the state Conservation Commission, their job was to create a historical sketch on each structure and interview the residents, if any, and other individuals who might have relevant information for the survey. Each of the fifty or more subjects listed in the project was selected based upon the historical significance of either the structural architecture or the residents who formerly lived there. On August 6, 1937, Ann Joplin completed her written survey, or historical sketch, of the "Old Burrough's Home" Birthplace of Booker T. Washington. The house was located near "the old Garrett (retired merchant Benjamin G. Garrett) home", formerly owned

by Garrett's father-in-law Josiah Ferguson, and one mile from the home of Asa Holland, postmaster and farmer.

Few surveys had been written on the homes of African Americans or other structures associated with African-American history and, arguably, this survey was the most historically significant in Franklin County. Three individuals associated with Dr. Washington's life or had knowledge of his birthplace were interviewed by Essie Smith, Mrs. Elizabeth Ferguson, granddaughter of James Burroughs, Henry Swain, who was a childhood friend of Booker T. Washington, and Walter St. Clair "who married into the Burroughs' family". In the sketch the family's home was described as an "unpretentious home...located at the end of a private road". This "private road" adjoined Rt. 122, ostensibly known as the Rocky Mount-Lynchburg Turnpike along which a score of antebellum homes, which had originated as log structures, were located. In *The Times of Franklin*, the Journal of the Franklin County, Virginia Historical Society, an interview of a former resident, Miss Mary Dinwiddie was recorded in which she again described the original Burroughs' house as "an unpretentious 1 ½ story red-clay, log cabin, two rooms wide". The article further mentioned that in later years the home was expanded with a one-story addition at the rear and the entire structure covered with poplar weatherboard, a common exterior treatment for log structures in the late 19th century.

The 1937 description also

mentioned the existence of "stables and most of the out-buildings" located "in front of the house, as was the queer custom of many pioneers." Some of those then extant buildings, and slave cabin foundations, were viewed by Booker T. Washington during his final visit to the Burroughs' plantation in 1908 when he recalled his experiences in the "dining room" addition of the "big house" where he operated a mechanical fan and the "old weave house near where his Aunt Sophie (Sophia Poe) lived."

The presence of locally found box bushes and evergreen trees distinguished the age of the home, just as did the remnants of an orchard, a nearby spring and an "unpainted frame building...at the left front of the house" all of which were still identifiable in photographs of the Booker T. Washington Memorial a decade later.

Though little information was provided by the then current owner, Mrs. J.H. Robertson, with the assistance of contemporary photographs the dimensional description offers a somewhat vivid view of the appearance of the home some seventy years after Booker T. Washington's exodus. For example, we know that the gabled front porch was supported by four square pillars. The "front room" was located immediately through a single six-paneled front door which had neither a "transom" or "side lights", commonly used to provide ambient light for the home's interior. The house had ten windows, consisting of twelve 10x12 panes, and there were hand-made six-panel doors inside the



Master Gardeners build raised beds.



Raised beds grow in number and are filled.

"It is a study in relevancy. There is a clear and present need today which we are able to meet and to pair up with our park mission."

Supt. Carla Whitfield



Beds are completed. Fencing comes next.



Fenced garden begins to produce.

Tackling Hunger Around Smith Mountain Lake by David English

Tackling Hunger around Smith Mountain Lake began in June of 2009 as a project of Smith Mountain Lake Rotary to address the hunger and nutrition needs around Smith Mountain Lake. Since then it has blossomed into a major community effort involving a large number of volunteers and organizations.

Beginning in October of 2009 and continuing to this day, the Tackling Hunger project has provided fruits and vegetables on a weekly basis to clients of Lake Christian Ministries (the local food pantry chosen to benefit from this project). The overall goal was to provide better nutrition to households in the Smith Mountain Lake area while educating more people about the need and engaging more people in addressing the need.

The major partners with the Smith Mountain Lake Rotary include the Lake Christian Ministries, Booker T. Washington National Monument, Franklin County Master Gardeners, Virginia Cooperative Extension Service, Dudley Elementary School, Smith Mountain Lake Christian Academy, and Hot Shots Entertainment Center.

All harvest goes to the clients of Lake Christian Ministries which provides food to about 500 families a month (1500 individuals). A family may only come once a month but may come back for several months in a row or periodically as they have a need. This therefore makes it very difficult for us to estimate the number of individuals served by this project. LCM states that there are over six thousand family visits for food over a year.

This is the second year that the Monument has partner on this project. Last year, the park garden project improved the lives of 250 families. This year, at last count, over 800 pounds of food has been harvested.

"The impact of this program has been and continues to be significant to numerous people in this community," says park superintendent Carla Whitfield. "It is a study in relevancy. There is a clear and present need

today which we are able to meet and to pair up with our park mission. As the food is distributed to area families in need, a bit of interpretive text on the legacy of Booker T. Washington accompanies it. So, both the stomach and mind are made full by our efforts."

For more information or to get involved please contact Dave English at djenglish@hughes.net.



(Top) Area youth help with hunger project. (Bottom) Volunteers harvest produce to combat hunger. (Photos on this page are taken by Mark Young for the Tackling Hunger Project.)

From the News Desk: Group Celebrates 'Obsession' with National Parks by Jane Clarke, USA Today (Part I)

On June 21, Dan Seckinger, a 53-year-old radiologist, traveled 1,350 miles from his Miami home to an obscure War of 1812 battlefield in Michigan, completing a years-long quest: to visit each of the 394 units in the national park system.

It wasn't easy. The odyssey took him 283,000 air miles. Factor in the additional highway and hiking miles, and he figures he's racked up enough mileage to travel to the moon and back.

In doing so, Seckinger joins an elite group of people – as few as 19 – to visit every National Park Service park, battlefield, recreation area, historic site,

monument, memorial, reserve and preserve – to name just some of the designations under which the 394 individual sites fall.

Still, Seckinger's got nothing on Nancy Bandley, a Southern California travel agent who is on Round 2 of a 394-site visit and figures she's spent \$500,000 in her pursuit of national parks. Or Gary Pritchard, a retiree from Huntsville, Ala., who's also on his second go-round and has revisited 279 park sites. *This year.*

The three are members of the National Park Travelers Club, a group of national park fans –

make that fanatics – that formed in 2003. About 200 of the club's members met in Washington, D.C., over the weekend for their annual convention. It's the kind of gathering in which the word "obsession" is bound to come up. More than once.

"Most of the people here have to be a little obsessive," acknowledges club co-founder Mike Brown, 42, a public works employee in Laurel Springs, N.J.

"This is *not* an easy hobby. In fact, it's like a job," says Bandley, who has traveled 30,000 miles so far this year in park-related travels.

"We're kind of an odd lot, but there's this camaraderie of people who have this passion," says Seckinger.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Passport to Your National Parks Program, which is, in part, the fuel that drives the NPTC. The program was devised in 1986 by Eastern National, a purveyor of interpretive materials sold at many NPS sites. Park visitors can buy passport booklets and collect stamps from most locales. . And since some parks have multiple stamps and stamps are sometimes retired, the quest to collect them becomes all the more challenging.

Summer Employees (Continued from page 4)

as his words bring to life personalities from the past. His work will help the Guild throughout the upcoming year to talk about the Civil War in 1861 with additional authority and presence.

Amy, a seventh-grade teacher at Benjamin Franklin Middle School, was selected over several other teachers from Title I school districts (at least 30% of students on free or reduced cost meals) into the Teacher-Ranger-Teacher (TRT) program.

Under TRT, selected teachers spend the summer working as park rangers, often living in the park. They perform various duties depending on their interests and the needs of the park, including developing and presenting interpretive programs for the general public, staffing the visitor center desk, developing curriculum-based materials for the park, or taking on special projects.

Then, during the school year, these Teacher Rangers bring the parks into the classroom by developing and presenting curriculum-based lesson plans that draw on their summer's experience. In April, during National Park Week, Teacher Rangers wear their NPS uniforms to school, discuss their summer as a park ranger, and engage students and other teachers in activities that relate to America's national parks.

Amy's tasks at Booker T. Washington National Monument are centered on revamping current curriculum and assisting with the coordination of the upcoming "New Perspectives on Booker T. Washington" Teacher Workshop and Symposium slated for November 8.

Note: See back of newsletter for details on the "New Perspectives on Booker T. Washington Teacher Workshop and Symposium.



(Top) Summer employees in front row at interpretive program at Appomattox Court House National Park. (Bottom) Summer employees pose for photo at Appomattox's park orientation map.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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We're on the web!
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Open daily from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.
except on Thanksgiving, Christmas,
and New Year's Day. During winter
months, park may close due to in-
clement weather. Please call in ad-
vance of park visit. Phone 540-721-
2094.

Upcoming Events

- September 14, 2011
9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Legacy Scanning Project

A team of archivists from the Library of Virginia, collaborating with the Franklin County Sesqui-centennial Committee, is traveling around the state scanning manuscript materials that reflect social, political, military, business, or religious life in Virginia during the period of the Civil War and the early period of Reconstruction. The public is invited to bring in their historical documents to the park Visitor Center to be scanned and preserved.

- September 16, 2011
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Franklin County Civil War Days

Park staff partners with area historic sites and history societies to teach students about the life of Booker T. Washington during the Civil War at Lakewatch. Free admission.

- September 17, 2011
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Harvest Time
Experience life on a mid-19th century farm with living history demonstrations, tours and children's activities reflecting life on a Virginia Tobacco Plantation. Free admission. Food & Ice cream for purchase.
- September 27-28, 2011
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Civil War 150 HistoryMobile

- This interactive museum on wheels visits the park. Free admission. Large groups please call.

- November 8, 2011
9 a.m.-4 p.m.

New Perspectives on Booker T. Washington

Join local teachers and the community members as current research on Booker T. Washington is examined and shared at the Christiansburg Institute. Free admission and lunch. Reservations needed, call Ranger Janet at 540.721.2094.

- December 3, 2011
3-8 p.m.
Old Virginia Christmas
Experience a 19th century Christmas on this Virginia plantation. Free.